

King Abdullah. Thank you, Mr. President, always a pleasure to be back. And thank you very much for always the kind support that you've given me and all Jordanians.

As you said so, we've had some very fruitful discussions on the peace process and Iraq. And I want to thank you again for the support that we have gotten from you for so many years on giving hope to Israelis and Palestinians. And I know that you want to find a solution that Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and har-

mony, and I hope that, if we can help in that respect, that is a great honor for us.

Thank you for allowing us to see you again, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:48 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the Federal Emergency Management Agency and an Exchange With Reporters *September 23, 2005*

The President. I stopped by the center to get a full briefing on Rita. We're now facing yet another big storm, and I appreciate the folks here who are working so hard to help the folks on the ground prepare for the storm.

I'm going down to San Antonio to see the prepositioned assets, to understand the relationship—or that the Federal Government's role is to support State and local governments. I want to watch that happen. Then I'm going to go out to our NORTHCOM headquarters to watch the interface between our United States military and, again, the State and local authorities. Our job is to assist—prepare for and assist the State and local people to save lives and to help these people get back on their feet.

Again, I want to thank the people here in Washington who are working with the folks in the—out in the field to do everything we possibly can to prepare for this second big storm that's coming into the Gulf of Mexico.

Thank you all.

President's Upcoming Visit to Texas and Colorado

Q. Sir, what good can you do going down to the hurricane zone? Might you get in the way, Mr. President?

The President. One thing I won't do is get in the way.

Q. But I mean, how—what good can you actually do? I mean, isn't there a risk of you and your entourage getting in the way?

The President. No, there will be no risk of me getting in the way, I promise you. We're going to make sure that we're not in the way of the operations. What I am going to do is observe the relationship between the State and local government, particularly out in Colorado Springs. That's what I want to see.

See, NORTHCOM is the main entity that interfaces, that uses Federal assets, Federal troops to interface with local and State government. I want to watch that relationship. It's an important relationship, and I need to understand how it works better.

Q. But critics might say this is overcompensation for the response to Katrina.

The President. We will make sure that my entourage does not get in the way of people doing their job, which will be search and rescue immediately. And rest assured, I understand that we must not and will

not interfere with the important work that will be going forward.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Tibor Rubin *September 23, 2005*

Laura and I welcome you to the White House. This is a special occasion for our Nation. We're here to pay tribute to a soldier with an extraordinary devotion to his brothers in arms and an unshakeable love for his adopted homeland of America.

Corporal Tibor "Ted" Rubin—many acts of courage during the Korean war saved the lives of hundreds of his fellow soldiers. In the heat of battle, he inspired his comrades with his fearlessness. And amid the inhumanity of a Chinese prisoner-of-war camp, he gave them hope. Some of those soldiers are here today, and they have never forgotten what they owe this man. And by awarding the Medal of Honor to Corporal Rubin today, the United States acknowledges a debt that time has not diminished.

It's our honor to welcome Ted's wife, Yvonne; daughter, Rosie, a second grade teacher, I might add—[*laughter*]*—Frank and Lai, welcome. Glad you all are here.*

Vice President, thank you for coming. Mr. Secretary, we're proud you're here. I appreciate Senator John Warner, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. Congressman Robert Wexler of Florida, welcome. Thank you for being here. Former Congressman Ben Gilman and Georgia are with us.

Secretary of the Army Francis Harvey; Pete Geren, acting Secretary of the Air Force; "Admiral G," Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs is with us; General Pete Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the United

States Army. And Rabbi, thank you very much for your blessings.

I want to thank Ambassador Andras Simonyi, the Ambassador of Hungary to the United States, for joining us. Proud you're here. Yes. [*Laughter*]

So honored to have the four Medal of Honor recipients with us: Barney Barnum, with the United States Marines; Al Rascon, the Army; Bob Foley, the Army; and Jack Jacobs of the Army. Proud you're here. Thanks for being here.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery that a President can bestow. It is given for acts of valor that no superior could rightly order a soldier to perform. And that is what we mean by "above and beyond the call of duty." By repeatedly risking his own life to save others, Corporal Rubin exemplified the highest ideals of military service and fulfilled a pledge to give something back to the country that had given him his freedom.

Born in Hungary in 1929, Ted and his family were rounded up by the Nazis and taken to concentration camps when he was just 13 years old. He was taken to Mauthausen Camp in Austria, where an SS officer told the prisoner, "You, Jews, none of you will ever make it out of here alive." And many did not. Before the war was over, both of Ted's parents and one of his sisters were lost in the Holocaust. Ted Rubin survived the camp for 14 months, long enough to be liberated by U.S. Army troops on May the 5th, 1945.